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coming when they were invited, and begging them now to go away. On those occasions when singing is called for it is nearly always the Mun who sing, and they possess a considerable repertoire of more or less sacred songs. All these songs are in the minor key, more or less rhythmic, with a great stressing of the last syllable of each line, which is prolonged for several notes, usually in a descending scale. The tunes are not set, and allow of easy improvisation. Songs are often sung at feasts, and always at marriages; they are always unaccompanied. The bamboo flutes which some young men make and play are used entirely as a solitary diversion.

iv

The services of the Mun are continuously necessary in the life of every Lepcha. They must always be present at birth, at marriage they are the only essential priests, and at the death of laymen their rôle is of more emotional importance than the lamas. Throughout life they are necessary for cleansing from supernatural danger, for blessing and solemnising different undertakings, and, above all, for expelling devils.

Ceremonial cleansing is performed by *pék*-ing, by the Mun waving certain objects over the actual or potential sufferer. The objects waved differ with the circumstances; thus in the fifth month of pregnancy both parents are *pék* with a bunch of elephant grass to insure an easy delivery: if labour is difficult the mother in childbirth is *pék* with a live chicken, and, if she or her husband have neglected a pre-natal precaution, with the object which has been wrongly handled or finished. Similarly after an abortion or still-born child has been thrown into the river, a Mun will *pék* the carriers with a bunch of stinging and thorny plants and the parents will be *pék* with a live animal which will later be sacrificed, in order to prevent the devil which has caused one death causing more. *Pék*-ing is employed in a number of circumstances, sometimes alone, and sometimes as part of an exorcism. It is the nearest approach in Lepcha life to ritual cleansing.

Blessings are invoked and pacts solemnised by the ritual of *sakyou faat*, the pouring or drinking of strained *chi* from a cup on the sides of which dabs of butter have been placed. It is not absolutely essential that Mun perform this ritual; any old and experienced man who has received *loong* may do so. *Sakyou faat* cannot be offered by women, except by women Mun inside their own homes, by lamas, or by people in mourning. The ceremony is performed to solemnise a marriage, to set up the ~~ingmay~~ relation, to mark the formal swearing of an oath or before starting any unusual undertaking.

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583 584 his or her uncle to make him like his partner. For if the two do not sleep together the girl will not be able to 'lighten her mothers' shoulder' (that is, help her mother-in-law), and the boy will shame his parents and all the expense that the parents have been put to will be wasted. Moreover, should the couple separate, the girl's family will be blamed for not seeing that they made love.

584 This is another situation in which the Lepchas' formulation of ideal behaviour differs very considerably from their practice. Betrothal is very often a period of great emotional stress, especially for the girl who will energetically refuse to have anything to do with her proposed husband. In all the cases that came to my notice of betrothed couples getting on badly together the pair had never achieved copulation and the older Lepchas in referring to these situations always stated that the difficulties would be got over if the pair slept together—a statement which seems to be borne out by experience. But just because the girls also hold this belief they repulse their husbands with even greater energy; I am almost certain that this repulsion is actuated not by physical or emotional distaste for the husband but by a deep-seated fear of leaving their family and their surroundings. In such situations the Lepcha theory calls for physical punishment of the recalcitrant party, but Lepcha practice makes such behaviour very unpleasant. The result is a good deal of threatenings and grumblings and no actions at all. In such situations those adults not directly responsible for the behaviour of the children are full of loud talk as to the energetic steps which should be taken; the responsible adults are full of excuses for putting off the crisis until another occasion.

In Lingthem in 1937 there were five boys or young men who were *asék*'d and three who had only had their wives home a few weeks or months. Of these, three had had very stormy betrothals in which the hostility had lasted for several years. In one case, that of Nariya, who was thirty years old (he had been married earlier but the marriage had broken down because of the girl's promiscuity followed by her running away with all the available valuables and cash), this hostility continued even after the performance of the marriage feast and a peaceful settlement only approached during the last days of my stay there. Nariya's wife was fourteen, a large overgrown girl. After three years' betrothal the marriage feast was 593 celebrated in the late autumn of 1936. Immediately after the 585 marriage the girl returned home and refused to have anything to do with her husband, saying: 'I do not want to see your face,' and

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593 585 exclaiming: 'May that man die!' Whenever Nariya went to visit her she used to throw stones at him to drive him away. It was said that she was carrying on a love affair with a Nepali in her distant village. On one occasion the girl's parents came to Lingthem, but Nariya was too shy to say anything. At the end of April Tempa said that he threatened the parents that if they did not send the girl he would apply to the police station. He explained that he spoke after consultation with the Mandal because Nariya's uncle Ashyok had not enough sense.

On May 11th, 1937, Nariya went to fetch his wife home; on May 17th she returned with him but bringing with her a younger brother aged twelve to sleep with her as a chaperone. On May 18th she went away again to Mangan to see her father, but she returned still accompanied by the younger brother on May 20th. On this day took place one of the bi-monthly monastery feasts and Nariya's wife took this opportunity to become formally introduced into the village community. Although she still did not sleep with her husband she seemed to be settling down and was helping in the preparations for the big annual feast of Boom koor which was to take place three days later, helping with the cooking and so on. She did not talk much but sat about quite comfortably in the groups where people made rather a fuss of her. All the time she kept some small child by her, either her own younger brother or Pankek, a little girl of six. She seemed to find comfort in the presence of young children. Tobgé was familiar with her, hugging her and feeling her breasts, but she showed no resentment. She had on a clean new green blouse but a filthy dirty skirt. The general belief was that in a day or so Nariya would succeed in sleeping with her and that then the marriage would settle down completely and happily.

Nariya it is true was not a very attractive character. He had an extraordinarily high-pitched almost eunochoid voice and a slightly sly expression. He was an orphan; his father, when he lived, was the richest man in Lingthem and a great deal of the wealth in cattle had been expended on the funeral feasts for him and many other relations of his generation who had died very close to one another. Nariya wished to regain his father's wealth and was therefore, most exceptionally for a Lepcha, engaged in strenuous [556] economies, spending as little as he could, except when he had to give feasts, on clothes or food; he was rather secretive.

Of the other recently married men Rigya, Nariya's cousin, and

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593 adopted brother, and Kutt'r were now getting on all right with their
586 wives after a preliminary period of conflict in each case lasting about four years. Kutt'r who was eighteen years old was married at the age of fourteen to a wife one month after *asék*, before which he had never met her. She had only come to live with him in the last few months. First of all they disliked one another thoroughly; then by the pressure of their families they were brought to sleep together but did not do anything. Only in the last two or three months have they copulated together; now they like one another.

585 Gongyop's son was born in 1919; he is a very girlish-looking and under-developed boy and preternaturally shy; it will be remembered that he was drinking his mother's milk up to the age of ten. Before *asék* he did not know his wife; *asék* took place about six months ago. The girl is older and bigger than he and at first he was frightened of her, though she spoke nicely to him. On May 19th he returned from his third visit to her at which they had slept together. He came home with a look on his face like a cat which had just been fed on cream and seemed rather proud of himself; he said that now he likes his wife. Datoop's younger son was *asék* by proxy for his elder brother Pichi; but Pichi at the beginning of May definitely refused the marriage and instead the youngest son was going to marry the girl. On May 9th he went off with his father to pay a visit to his bride. I asked the boy what present he was taking to his parents-in-law, at which his father replied 'His present is between his legs'. He was, however, also taking a leg of meat with him. Datoop hoped that, if the harvest was good, the girl would be brought home in the autumn.

On March 19th Mikmar, Chano's eldest son, aged thirteen, was *asék*'d to an unknown girl three or four years older than himself. By May 9th he had paid the girl three visits. They are patently unable to sleep together for Mikmar is still very childish, but they get on well enough together and give each other food.

584 In Lingthem there were only four unmarried girls over the age of twelve; of these Prumtu, the girl with the squint, is likely to wait some time before marrying and Tafoor's eldest daughter has only just passed twelve and has not yet been asked for. The other two girls are the two eldest daughters of Pargetu, aged sixteen and twelve respectively; they have been *asék*'d to two brothers. The
593 younger girl, Tangvoong, gets on well enough with her young husband, but the older one, Kondé, does not; the two both fight

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831 two to *asék* a woman of forty were also considered funny. These
522 two old stalwarts were, however, somewhat exceptional; most Lepchas after the age of seventy abandon all such thoughts and actions. I question whether the generally expressed fear of surviving one's strength into extreme old age is in any way consciously connected with the fear of losing potency.

831 The Lepchas' attitude towards sex is extremely forth-right and unemotional. They openly equate sexual activity with eating, saying that the one is as natural and as necessary as the other; and they tend to treat both activities as of about equal emotional importance. Sexual activity, unless it forms part of a larger pattern of give-and-take, sets up no social obligations between the two parties; neither is considered to be indebted or especially benefited, and copulation entails no further duties. The Lepcha attitude to a transitory sexual partner is summed up in the Edwardian smoking-room joke: 'Since when does sleeping together constitute a social introduction?' The Lepchas are much occupied with sex; it is the subject of much of their conversation and nearly all their humour; it is regarded as almost as essential as food. Sex is intended to be exclusively sensual and almost impersonal; the culture makes no allowance for deep personal relationships passionately adhered to between sexual partners. If sex becomes emotionally serious it is always a nuisance and, if either of the partners are betrothed or married, it may be disastrous.

iii

585 The majority of marriages take place in the autumn months after
[587] the harvest is gathered; a few, however, take place at other periods, particularly second marriages, which are usually celebrated an exact calendar year after the death of the first spouse. It is necessary to find an auspicious day for the marriage, taking into consideration
[787] the birth years of the two contracting parties. Should a relation on either side die on the marriage day it is a bad omen, and signifies either the sterility or early death of the wife.

The groom's family usually spend several months before the date fixed in collecting the necessary food and animals. Just before the marriage date (the number of days before depends on the journey necessary) the groom goes with his *bek-bu* to his bride's house taking with him the hind leg of a pig, a scarf and a rupee as a present for his mother-in-law. On his arrival the sisters and other girl friends

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of the bride will lie in wait for the groom armed with nettles and other thorny plants and will pretend to drive him away; to be allowed to go on the groom must give them all a present of at least six annas. As soon as the groom has given his presents he returns to his own home, and almost immediately after the bridal procession sets out. 585

The bridal procession consists of twelve people besides the bride; they are (1) her *bek-bu*, (2) an old and experienced man, usually the Mandal of her village, (3) a 'sacrificer', preferably a Mun, (4) a paternal uncle, (5) a maternal uncle, (6) an elder brother, (7) an elder sister or aunt, who is called the bride's friend, (8) a younger sister, (9) a younger brother, and finally three men to carry the presents from the bride which consist of a load of *chi*, a load of popped corn, and a pig. The girl's parents stay behind and play no rôle in their daughter's marriage; for them it is considered to be a sad time, for it marks the formal loss of their child. In the bridal procession the six named relations may always be classificatory ones if there are no 'real' ones available.

Three times on the way to the groom's house the bridal party stops for ceremonial food and drink, which is provided by the groom. The first stop is called *chang yook*, when food and *chi* are provided; the paternal uncle and the sacrificer must drink two *patyoot* of *chi* at this place; the rest may do as they please. The second halt is called *long-so* and there three big bamboo holders of strained *chi* are provided for the party. The final halt is called *Gorshoon*; this is very near the groom's house and here a shed is erected to accommodate the bridal party. As soon as they arrive at this shed another container of strained *chi* is provided.

When the bridal party has entered the temporary shed the girl's *bek-bu* goes into the house with a ceremonial scarf which he offers to the groom's family; if there is a lamaist altar in the house the scarf is put on this. Then the bridal party is regaled on ground rice and *chi* and this is followed by a ceremonial meal called 'wiping away the sweat of the bride' and consisting of eight big handfuls of rice and eight fowls, which are boiled and given to the bride's party and also to the older men and lamas present. Following this the girl's *bek-bu* ceremoniously offers the presents which have been brought in the name of the bride's family to the elders of the groom's family. These presents are received by the old men of the groom's family with a show of great surprise and some indignation: 'Why do you bring these?' they say, 'we only want the

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585 bride and no presents.' The *bek-bu* answers: 'We have brought these to make a sacrifice.' These gifts are then dedicated by a Mun or experienced man; the day after the marriage this dedicated pig and grain will be carefully divided up and all the girl's relations-in-law and the other inhabitants of her new village must eat a small portion; in this way the new wife is formally accepted into the community. Everybody has eaten food of her providing.

Since the bride and her party have usually come from some way away this ceremony generally takes place towards evening and it is followed by a feast after which people go to sleep. Unless the bride is a widow or already the mother of her husband's children she will not enter the groom's house that night but will pass it in the shed which has been specially erected for that purpose.

There may have been some guests present on the first day, but it is the second day which is the really big feast, at which almost everybody in the village will be present.

The lamas arrive about nine o'clock with their books and musical instruments and will take up their position at the right-hand wall of the *dé-ong* against the altar, with one of the Dorjé Lapoon at the end nearest the altar. Intermittently during the whole day they will burn incense and read their books and play on the musical instruments. Except for the ceremony of 'receiving the bride' described lower down, they will only leave their position for a very few minutes at a time to go out and ease themselves. They eat and drink where they pray and from the moment they arrive a *patyoot* of *chi* is placed in front of them, which is constantly replenished and renewed.

Early in the morning the first ox—'the ox for eating'—will be killed and cut up; its ribs are boiled for the feast and sausages are made out of the intestines; the head, right foreleg, left hindleg, and half the sausages are preserved for the bride's family. Then a second ox—the 'ox of the groom'—is tethered fairly near the house but somewhere in the forest—that is not on cultivated land. By this ox is erected by the Mun or sacrificer a sort of altar on which is placed a scarf and a rupee and a big container of strained *chi* and also a bowl with butter at the side from which the strained *chi* will be drunk. Then the Mun dedicates the live ox to all the gods and repeats the long sacred story which tells of the origin of marriage.[6] This prayer and rehearsal of the story takes upwards of three hours; unless somebody wishes to be able to tell the story in his turn, the

[6] See Appendix IV.

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officiating sacrificer will probably be completely neglected. The rest of the company will be talking and eating and drinking. The bride and her party will probably remain fairly isolated in their shed. When the sacred story is finished the bride and groom and the bride's party and the groom's party are all summoned to the Mun's altar. Then the Mun calls on all the gods of the neighbourhood and prays to them not to be angry but to let everybody enjoy the ox which is going to be killed and to bless the married couple and give them many children. He then turns to the bride and groom and preaches a sermon to them, telling them to love one another and not to quarrel; if they separate may the ox they are going to eat burn and poison them. After that he hands to the bride the buttered bowl filled with strained *chi*; she sips it three times and after each sip the bowl is refilled as each sip is a symbolic emptying of the bowl. After the bride the groom drinks, and then the members of the bride's party and the groom's party in turn take three ceremonial sips from a smaller buttered bowl. This drinking of the buttered *chi* is really the sacramental consecration of the marriage and represents a pact of friendship between the bride and her new family and village.

When the ceremony has been completed the ox of the groom is killed with a bow and arrow. It is absolutely necessary that the wife's younger brother, or if she has not got one the nearest possible classificatory younger brother, should kill this ox; if anybody else were to do it the bride's family have to pay a fine of Rs. 5 to the groom's family. The ox is shot twice from a very short distance and an attempt is made to pierce the heart behind the left foreleg. It is a very messy way of killing an ox, which takes about a quarter of an hour to die. When the ox is finally dead the bride's younger brother pours water over its muzzle after which this ox is also cut up. The meat from this ox is not consumed at the feast; the head and one of the hind legs will be taken back to the wife's family as well as half the intestines turned into sausages; the rest of the meat will be cut up and divided and given away as parting presents to all the guests.

After this ceremony the bride and her party are conducted by the two *bek-bu* into the *dé-ong*, where they take up their special positions against the left-hand wall facing the lamas. These positions are, starting from the altar, the old and experienced man, the sacrificer, the paternal uncle, the maternal uncle, the elder brother, the 'bride's friend', the bride, the younger sister and the

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585 younger brother; on the opposite side with the lamas are, starting from the same direction, the Mandal, a *youmi*, a paternal uncle and the groom. Standing between the two parties are the *bek-bu* of the bride and the groom.

When the two parties are settled the two *bek-bu* make a collection of money from every guest; each guest should give at the very least a ceremonial scarf and a rupee; those who can will give more. The husband's *bek-bu* makes a list of all the gifts given and the return presents of meat are apportioned roughly in proportion to the money given. When the money is collected it is divided up by the two *bek-bu*, the greater part going to the bride's party who have to receive Rs. 3 each, with the exception of the paternal uncle who gets Rs. 4 and the bride's friend who gets Rs. 6. The *bek-bu* receive Rs. 5 each. If there is any excess of the money it goes to the married couple, but if there is a deficiency the husband has to make up the required sum out of his own pocket. After this the *dé-ong* is cleared except for the parties of the bride and groom. In the kitchen a Mun of the husband's village will be calling on the gods. Just before the ceremony starts a ceremonial meal of a boiled pig's head and chickens is partaken of by both parties.

Then is performed the ceremony of 'receiving the bride'; in this ceremony the man's *bek-bu* plays no rôle. The conversation chiefly takes place between the girl's *bek-bu*, her uncles, and the bridegroom's party. The girl's *bek-bu* takes a scarf in one hand and a rupee in the other and addresses the girl as follows: 'You have been married into —— *ptso*; now you are bound to them and if you had any other lovers you must leave them; now you have no connection with people other than this *ptso*. In the beginning Tarbong-bo and Naripnom and Komsi*thing* originated marriage and so we perform it today. Now you are bound.' With these words the girl's *bek-bu* puts a scarf round her bowed neck and the rupee into her joined hands and then the girl's *bek-bu* sits down.

After this the Mandal will ask the bride who are her special *moong* and *rum* (devils and gods) and what sacrifices are necessary. Should she say there are none, or keep silent, the *youmi* will say, 'Don't tell a lie; we know there must be at least one *rum* and one *moong* and if you have children and they get ill a Mun or a lama will find out what supernaturals you have brought here; so speak up and tell the truth.' After that someone on the girl's side, most probably her paternal or maternal uncle, will tell who are her private supernaturals and what are the sacrifices necessary for them.

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[415]

ONGDEN'S WEDDING

Above : Ongden in a clean dress. Behind him old Adér.

Below : The feast.

[facing p. 336]

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585 Somebody of the groom's party will convey this information to the Mun in the other room, who will then perform the necessary sacrifices with *chi*, incense, rice, and the chest of an ox.

When this business is dealt with the girl's paternal uncle will say to the representatives of the groom: 'We are giving this girl to the —— *ptso*; if you are not good to her we will take her back and punish you.' The groom's party give elaborate thanks and promise that the bride will be well treated and happy.

585 522 After this there is a considerable hazing of the bride by the two parties, the girl's paternal uncle referring to her in complimentary *tang-bor*, to which the groom's side will retort, if possible making the remarks obscene and derogatory to the bride, who will be sitting with her head hidden in her head-cloth so that it cannot be seen if she is or is not confused. For example, if the girl is older than the groom the girl's uncle may say: 'We are giving you the yolk of this egg which we have peeled for you.' One of the groom's party may reply: 'It is very kind of you, but it seems to us as if this egg has been considerably nibbled at! And we would not be surprised if her pubic hair were not as long as that of Sor *moong*, or in appearance rather like a field of ripe corn!' 'We assure you that the egg has been freshly peeled—just so as to make it easy for you to eat.' 'Well it seems to us the shell has been off a very considerable time!' 'And what does it matter if her pubic hair *is* like a tangled bush? A clever goat can find its way through any bramble. . . .' Pleasantries in this metaphorical vein continue for some time. If the bride is a young girl the *doubles ententes* will be altered to suit the circumstances; thus, if the *tang-bor* about the egg is made an apt reply would be: 'Thank you so much for the new-laid egg; we will eat it very carefully, just a little bit at a time; in that way it will get used to it and like it.'

585 When the teasing of the bride is finished the lamas return; the bride and groom present the Dorjé Lapoon with a plate of rice and then the lamas chant a formal prayer over the couple called *ong-shu-shet*—a prayer for future children.

585 533 535 After this the rest of the day and all the night is given over to feasting and drinking and singing and dancing. Five young women of the groom's family are appointed to carry round the ladles of boiling water to fill the *chi patyoot*, and five older women to refil the *patyoot* with fresh *chi* and give out the food. The songs are mostly improvised, but there are some traditional comic ones; the girl's *bek-bu* almost always sings in a feigned falsetto voice

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585 the song beginning, ' Father, help me ! Mother, help me ! ' The dancing is completely unorganised, and merely consists of indi-
533 viduals hopping or stamping more or less rhythmically as they feel
535 disposed. Unlimited food and drink are provided, and it is considered desirable and almost inevitable that everybody should get as drunk as possible. There is a strong sexual overtone to the atmosphere and towards evening many couples separate and go off into the forest for a short spell ; they mostly return to the house where the feast is being held before night has completely fallen.

585 At the only marriage feast that I witnessed—that of Ongden with his second wife—I noted ' About seven o'clock the noise was exactly like a very crowded English pub at closing time : the atmosphere was unbelievable. Nearly a hundred very dirty people in two small rooms which had been shut up as much as possible with the balconies closed by wooden partitions and so on ; there was a huge fire of wet wood smoking hard so that one could only just see across the room. In the kitchen some people were sleeping round the fire while others were still cooking ; at one side there was a very bloody mess where sausages were being made from the entrails by three young men ; others were asleep in the muck. In the *dé-ong* the ground was so crowded with sitters and sleepers that there was only just room for the female relations of the husband to circulate with their wooden ladles of boiling water with which they constantly replenished the bowls of *chi* ; they appeared to be the only relatively sober people present. The bride and her party sat as if they had never moved, in their long line against the wall of the *dé-ong* ; the groom wandered about rather disconsolately, talking very little to anyone. Old Adér, who had previously pulled up his dress and exposed himself during the sacrifice, started singing in a minor key dragging over the syllables ; whereupon Lumba's *jethi* (that is his first wife), who is renowned as a singer, got up and asked for some meat to be given her as a fee for the song she was going to sing ; she was given some and started singing, but nobody took much notice though everybody said " hush " ; the singers walked about as if they were cabaret artists. The pace of the evening got slower and slower and sleepier and sleepier ; the children sat about or slept. It would have been very rude for anybody to go home before sunrise the next day.'

585 This marriage of Ongden with a widow was slightly irregular
587 and abbreviated, first because it was for both parties a second marriage, and secondly because the bride had been living with her

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husband for some months before he had assembled enough food for the ceremony. The ceremony only took place for one day instead of for two and the bride and her party went straight away on arrival into the house. The day before the marriage the bride withdrew to a village one day's walk away instead of to her own home which was three days away, where she met her bridal party. After the ceremony the post-nuptial visits were curtailed, but it was considered improper for the newly married couple to start living at home at once and so they spent a few days at the house of his 'nephew' Tingkep.

Early in the morning after the marriage feast the bride and groom, together with the bride's party and two friends of the groom to carry the heads and legs of the oxen, set out on a return visit to the bride's house. When they have arrived the groom stops as little time as possible; overnight if the bride's home is some way away, otherwise not even that. On that day all the guests who were present at the marriage feast return with gifts of crops or *chi*, which they give according to their wish and ability as a help towards the very considerable expense of the marriage feast.

Two weeks later the groom goes to fetch his bride again. Either at this visit or at the subsequent one the girl's father provides a feast for the newly married couple. When the bride and groom leave the girl's house her father sends back as a present to the man's father a load of *chi* and a load of rice. The couple then stop a week in the husband's house; at the end of that time they go back to the girl's house, taking with them as presents to the girl's parents from the groom's parents exactly the same presents as the girl herself had brought. The couple then spend a few days at the bride's home and then finally return to the groom's. At this final removal the girl brings with her such private property as she may possess in the shape of animals or harvested grain as well as her clothes and jewels.

Some time during the first year of marriage the bride may go to visit her parents with a present of a pig and they will in return give her a milch cow or a heifer. This does not always take place, usually only if the bride's parents are relatively rich.

If the horoscopes of the married pair are unfavourable or if ill-luck is foretold, this ill-luck can be temporarily averted in the following way: two lamas will make small millet images of the husband and wife called *parr-ko* and into these the lamas will transfer all the ill-luck which is foreseen in the sacred books. When

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585 777 this is done the husband and wife must each carry away their own image and throw it into the forest. The cost of this service is either Rs. 3 a head or enough grain for two months. This ceremony, however, only postpones the ill-luck for two or three years, after which it must be repeated.

585 As can be seen, these spaced visits are carefully arranged to make the bride's severance from her family as gentle as possible. It is only very exceptionally, as in the case of Nariya described above, that after the marriage ceremony the bride will refuse to return to her husband's house. It is also worth noting that until well after the ceremony the parents of the children being married play no rôle whatsoever.

The marriage feast represents very considerable expense—if everything had to be bought somewhere between Rs. 200 and Rs. 300; for most people this entails saving up for a couple of years. Nearly everybody who can provides this feast; in the case of very poor people general contributions will be made such as were outlined in Chapter Six.[7] In the case of a *komok myok*—that is a man living with his wife's family and taking the place of the non-existent son—the feast is very much smaller and is chiefly provided by the girl's family.

iv

602 592 The newly married girl is likely to find herself in a somewhat subservient position; it is her task to do the cooking and most of the household chores under the direction of the 'house mother', who is almost always her mother-in-law. She also has to maintain constantly respectful behaviour towards her father-in-law and the other men—her husband's elder brothers and her husband's father's brothers if they live in the house—who are so classified. If her husband is not the youngest brother she will only have this subservient position until the younger brothers marry; then their wives in their turn will occupy the position of youngest daughter-in-law and have to do the greater part of the household work. There is usually considerable friendliness between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law; the daughter-in-law is taking a lot of work off her mother-in-law's shoulders and in return the mother-in-law instructs her and cajoles her to keep her happy.

574 There is no bar on the girl paying relatively frequent visits to her parents; she need not necessarily be accompanied by her

[7] See Chapter Six, p. 156.

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Pemba is Datoop's eldest son and is now twenty-seven, his wife being four years younger. He had already started his Lama's training when he was summoned to work in Gangtok. He remained at the palace for nearly ten years, when he left the Maharaja's service at his own request. Like his friend Chodu, he too was a scullion. When he was in Gangtok he learnt to wear boots and as a result still has very tender feet. His mother says that he was not weaned early; and perhaps because of this he was a very nervous child. We often noticed that he flinched at any sudden noise, and even now he says he cannot bear the sight of blood. He used to cry a lot when he first left home, but after his return on leave he soon found that he wanted to go back to Gangtok again. His parents told me they were very anxious while he was away from home and always used to visit him once a year. He was sometimes beaten as a child and would threaten to throw himself in the fire; but his parents would only laugh, and told him that if he really wished to die they would not prevent him. Although he still is rather nervous, and much more retiring than the average Lepcha, he does not appear to be in any way maladjusted. He is completely bilingual, speaking Nepali almost as well as his own language.

Pichi, aged twenty-three, is Datoop's second son. He has just returned from Gangtok, where he has spent the last eight years or so learning to be a carpenter. While he was still away from home his parents decided that it was time for him to be betrothed; but he sent back word that he was too busy to leave his work. For this reason his brother, a boy of fifteen, acted as his proxy at the ceremony. When Pichi came home the following year he at once made it clear that he had no intention of proceeding with this prearranged marriage, and said that when he wished to marry he would choose a wife for himself. The Mandal, who made all the arrangements, was somewhat perplexed at this state of affairs, such a case never having arisen before. He now thinks that in order not to cause offence the best thing is

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for the girl to marry both brothers. If this is done only Pichi will be required to carry out the ceremony; and having done this he can hand the girl over to his younger brother. There would be no objection to him marrying what would theoretically be a second wife, should he later wish to do so. In the meantime Pichi gets all the amusement he wants with his elder brother's wife. This he told me late one night when he was somewhat the worse for wear. In addition to his own language, he also speaks Sikkim Tibetan and is the only man in the village who can read and write Nepali. Because of this all official correspondence comes to him for translation. He has not yet fully readjusted himself to the simplicity of village life, but, even so, already thinks he would rather live at home.

Datoop's wife is one of the most outstanding characters in Lingtem. She was married at twelve but did not live with her husband until after his return from Gangtok. Unlike most other women, she is often to be seen in charge of work and her orders are instantly obeyed. She has the reputation of giving good food at her house, but, according to Tafoor, would be a better cook if she took a little less to drink. She has a pleasing open face, but her appearance is somewhat spoilt by a missing canine tooth. She came originally from a village beyond Mangen, and still visits her old home occasionally, where her brothers are still living. She has better jewellery than any other women in the village; this she bought with the proceeds of her private fields. In her opinion women have a hard time, and no private life at all. She thinks, however, that grown-up girls are glad to get away from home and that marriage is the best state for them. Like her husband she, too, is a Lama and holds the rank of Chötembu; and as such has the power to beat up people in the monastery. I asked her what sort of offences would merit her interference and she replied, without the slightest hesitation, "having sexual intercourse inside the building, or within its grounds." She added that it would be considered slightly shameful for a woman, although an Inebu, to beat a man; but nobody really minds.

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159 to have an altar-room, and also a set of books, to read which
342 Lamas are called in as necessary. I noticed that by means of
622 bamboo conduits water was made available inside the house,
[312 where it dripped into a huge copper vessel. This was the only
336] house in Lingtem which might be described as having "running water."

159 The Mandal was an only child, and when his father had
587 already handed over most of his work, he adopted another boy in order to have someone to work the fields. On the death of his father the Mandal handed his wife, of whom he was growing tired, over to this adopted brother; and then married again. The first wife died shortly after, whereupon the Mandal gave his brother the second; and himself married a third. The second wife, who died four years ago, did not care for this arrangement and soon returned to her own home, whereupon the adopted brother was presented with wife number three; and the Mandal married yet again.
● [585] Since he and his brother were living in the same house no ceremony was performed when these cast-off women were handed on; but this would have been necessary had the two brothers been living in separate houses. The Mandal has an only daughter, and passionately desires to have a son. It is this, he says, that has led him into matrimony time after
[789] time; and he has not finished yet! The people saw he will never have a son, since in the time of his father a curse was laid on the family. This was done by an evil-minded Lama, who thought that if there were any more children they would claim the land adjacent to their house. This was the property of some people who had died without heirs, and it had not at that time been reallotted.

159 It is generally believed that the Mandal is not the son of his
[848] supposed father, who was impotent. Once, when the father was absent from home, his mother, anxious lest the family die out altogether, induced a certain man to come and visit her
159 daughter-in-law. The story is known to the whole of the
837 village, and is said to have been made public by Chala's own biological father. He appears to have been a man of

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241 The following calendar shows the arrangement of agricultural work throughout the year. It starts with February, which is the first month of the Tibetan year:

February:	Clear ground and sow buckwheat in the lower parts of the valley.
March:	Clear ground and sow dry rice, millet, and a little maize.
April:	Clear ground in the higher places and sow more dry rice, millet, barley and wheat; the last two being sown together as a mixed crop.
May:	Reap buckwheat, and sow more millet and maize.
June:	Plant rice terraces. Weed dry rice. This is the worst month for food shortage.
July:	Sow more millet and also buckwheat. [illegible]eral weeding.
August:	Reap the first rice terraces, and prepare drying sheds for cardamoms. Sow more buckwheat.
September:	Reap dry rice and cardamoms. This is done mostly by the men, as it is heavy work. At the same time the women reap the millet.
October:	Sow barley and wheat, also onions. Continue reaping the cardamom crop.
November:	Clear ground for buckwheat. Make arrangements to sell the cardamom harvest.
December:	Continue to dispose of cardamoms. Women start to prepare the ground for buckwheat. This is the slackest month of the year.
January:	Sow buckwheat.

* * * * *

585 Most marriages take place in October, November, and December, as during these three months money and plenty of 000 food are available, and work is light. House-building and

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585 This story is always told at Lepcha weddings, at the time the animal sacrifice is made, and explains why a copper pot, pig, and other articles always form part of the marriage gifts. It was told me by the Mandal, who learnt it from his father when he was a young man. It is known to all Muns, but not by many "ordinary" people.

584 [576] When it is wished to arrange a marriage the parents of the boy concerned must first send for a *Pi-bo*, or go-between, as it is not etiquette to conduct the preliminaries in person. The meaning of this word is literally "a nicely-spoken person," which, in view of the use made of elegant periphrases during the course of the actual marriage ceremonies, well describes the duties of the office. The *Pi-bo* may be any suitable experienced man; but in actual practice, in Lingtem, it is nearly always the Mandal.

584 431 The parents now prepare a special ceremonial gift known as *Khachyong*, which consists of eight pounds of fermented chi-millet, one rupee, and a Tibetan ceremonial scarf. If the last is not available six annas in cash may be sent in its place.

584 The *Khachyong* is taken by the boy's *Pi-bo* to the house of some near relative of the selected girl, usually to a brother of one or other of her parents; but in no circumstances may it be presented to the girl's parents direct. Having arrived at the village the *Pi-bo* ascertains from the girl's relative who will act as her go-between, after which the two men visit him and hand over the *Khachyong*. In return for this present the girl's *Pi-bo* promises to see what he can do in the matter, and the boy's representative then returns to his own home. All this, of course, is a mere formality, since in most cases it has been previously ascertained, perhaps years before, that the proposed marriage is acceptable to all concerned.

The girl's *Pi-bo* keeps the chi-millet for himself, but takes the rupee and the scarf to the girl's parents and discusses the proposed marriage with them. It is the custom for them at first to refuse, giving as excuse that the boy is too poor, or not of good enough family. The *Pi-bo* continues to plead with them, and if unsuccessful in gaining their consent he returns

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584 sexual experience; or in a case where a particularly shy boy is being betrothed to some girl with whom he was previously unacquainted.

At the end of the ten days the boy returns to his own home; but he is now at liberty to visit the girl whenever he wishes. He usually goes to stay with her from time to time, and also brings her to his own home whenever it is convenient. This gradual weaning of the girl from her parents seems to me an admirable arrangement, for when the time comes for her to leave home finally there is no psychological wrench: she has already been able to adjust herself gradually to the new state of affairs. Even after marriage it is usual for a girl to go back to her parents from time to time, so that unless she has married into a very distant village she is at no time completely cut off from them.

There are no ceremonies intervening between betrothal and marriage, and the interval between the two is entirely dependent upon the wealth of the bridegroom's family. Provided that money and food are available for the necessary feasts the marriage can take place on the first auspicious day after betrothal: on the other hand it may be deferred for years if necessary; and may even never take place at all. [848] Once the pair have been formally betrothed there is no objection to their having children, since such are considered to be in every respect legitimate.

• 585 The actual day for the marriage is determined by a Lama, and a few days previously the boy escorts the girl back to her own home, should she happen not to be living there at the time. On the day before the wedding the bridegroom, together with his attendants, sets out to bring the bride to his own home, the whole party being known as *Nyom le-bu*. In addition to the bridegroom himself, it consists of his *Pi-bo*, one or other of his paternal uncles, and a boy friend known as *Myok tyol*, who is a sort of best man. They take with them one leg of pork and one rupee and six annas in cash. The six annas is known as *Sarong chut*. If this is not paid the women of the girl's household will rush out and attack the men with

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nettles, which they have previously gathered against their arrival. As soon as the *Sarong chut* is handed over the party is allowed to enter the house, where it spends the rest of the day and night feasting and drinking. The pork is consumed by the women only, and the men receive no share of it.

When the bridegroom's party arrives it is given a light meal of tea and parched rice, followed, of course, by the inevitable *chi*. Later on a special ceremonial meal known as *Sohol set zo-kup* is served which consists of cooked rice, pork, and two chickens, one of which is eaten by the bridegroom and the other by the bride's attendants.

Early the next morning the party returns to the boy's home. It is now augmented by the bride and her attendants, who are as follows:

Kegu Numbu:	He is the leader of the bride's party and should be an elderly and experienced man. The office is usually performed by some near relative.
Rum fat-bo:	A sacrificer. He makes the necessary offerings to the gods and is usually a Mun.
Aku:	The bride's younger paternal uncle.
Ajyong:	One or other of the bride's mother's brothers.
Changku:	Some elderly friend of the family and preferably a man of standing in the village. His duties are to prepare and distribute the meat at the wedding feast.
Nyom Moo:	One or other of the bride's mother's sisters.
Nyom Chimbu:	Bridesmaid. The bride's sister often undertakes this duty; but she must be unmarried.
Nyom Faming:	Bride's brother: younger, if possible. He represents all her male relatives.
Faming Tyol:	Male attendant upon the *Nyom Faming*.

In addition to the above there are also a number of men to

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585 carry the necessary loads, so that the whole party forms quite an imposing gathering. It takes with it one complete pig's carcass, a full load of chi-millet and sixteen pounds of rice, half of which should be parched.

When the procession arrives within about half a mile of the bridegroom's home two boys are sent out to meet it. They take with them two bamboos of *chi*. One of these is given to the *Rûm fat-bo*, and the other to the *Aku*. They first offer a little to the gods, after which the rest is distributed and consumed on the spot. In the meantime the two boys run back as hard as they can go and give warning that the procession is approaching.

[343 415 273] A small shed, known as *Gor shun*, has been previously constructed outside the house and a number of bamboo containers filled with *chi* are now placed ready inside it. The bridal party is escorted straight to the *Gor shun*, where it immediately consumes the *chi* without further ceremony; the idea being to make all concerned a little intoxicated as quickly as possible, in order to make the party go with a swing. A light meal is now served, and a special pot of ceremonial unstrained *chi*, known as *Chi-lok*, is offered. This is covered with a cloth, and after being ceremonially offered is taken away again inside the house. It is not drunk and is used for libations to the gods.

As soon as the party has rested a little it is escorted inside the house, where the guests, usually the whole of the village, have already gathered and are probably no longer sober. [788] Each member of the party prostrates himself three times in front of the altar; after which all sit down on the floor, ranging themselves in a line along one wall, the bridegroom's attendants being seated along the opposite wall.

While a Mun is making a sacrifice to the family gods and demons of the girl's family in one room, the ceremony of handing the bride over takes place in another. For this purpose the respective *Pi-bos* stand up facing one another in front of the altar, but everyone else remains seated on the floor.

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The bride's *Pi-bo* stands with a ceremonial scarf in one hand and a rupee in the other, and addresses her as follows: 585

"You have now married into the X clan: now you are bound to its members; and if you have any lovers now is the time to drop them, for in future you should have no such connections outside your new family. In the beginning of all things Tarbong and Komsi originated marriage, and carried out the ceremony as we are doing it to-day. Now are you bound."

As he says these words he places the scarf round the bride's neck and puts the rupee into her joined hands and sits down again. The Mandal now asks the girl the names of her family gods and demons, and what sacrifices should be made to them, although these are, of course, already known to all concerned. Should she remain silent, or reply that she has none, some old man of the bridegroom's village will say to her: "You must not tell lies: we know perfectly well that you must have at least one personal god and demon; so speak up and tell us their names. Moreover, if later on you have any children and they get ill the Mun will certainly be able to find out who their supernaturals are, so you might just as well tell us the names now and be done with it."

If the girl still remains silent her *Aku* or *Ajyong* will reply for her, after which she is formally handed over to the bridegroom, the necessary conversation being carried out by means of somewhat obscene periphrases, of which the following are typical examples:

"Now we hand this egg (i.e. the bride) over to you, so look after it carefully." It sometimes happens that the bride is older than the boy, in which case a suitable reply to the above remark would be: "Very many thanks for the gift: but the egg does not look exactly new-laid." 585 522

If the girl is of such an age that it is likely that she has had many lovers someone will probably remark: "She certainly looks a little shop-soiled; and I imagine that her pubic hair is as long as Sor Mung's tresses." To this the correct reply is: "Well, you see, the fact is we have carefully shelled the eggs so

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585 that it will be all the easier to eat." But to this the retort is:
522 "Yes: quite so. But it is obvious that the egg has not been freshly shelled."

This sort of banter is continued until neither party can think of anything fresh to say. All the time it is going on the bride hangs her head demurely and covers her face with her hands in order to hide her blushes (if any): but since most of the assembled company are by this time distinctly drink-taken, to say the least of it, nobody takes any offence and the whole ceremony is conducted with the utmost good nature.

585 After this a special dish called *Hik zo-kup* is served to the bridal party and the assembled Lamas, should any be present. It consists of eight fowls cooked with rice. In the portion given to the bride there should be one leg which has been cooked complete, with the claws still on. Following this *Mon zo-kup*, which consists of pork and rice, is served: like the previous dish it too is not offered to the general company. While this is going on the presents brought by the bride (the pig's carcass, etc.) are brought in and put down in front of the altar. Now two old men of the bridegroom's village stand up and offer the *Nyom Kyomo*, as the present is called, to the gods. They turn towards the altar and tell the gods that the present has been brought by such-and-such a girl, who has come to live in the house from this time onwards. They then offer the gift in the same manner to the Lamas, who signify their assent by nodding their heads. The *Nyom Kyom* is then taken up and put away in the next room.

A general meal of meat, rice, vegetables, and so on is now served to everybody, including the bride and bridegroom, who both eat out of the same plate on this occasion. By the time it is finished it will probably be already dark, but nobody thinks of going home. Some of the guests continue drinking throughout the night; others fall asleep where they sit. Every square inch of the floor is occupied and the atmosphere is like nothing so much as a London fog: nobody minds.

Early the following morning everyone is roused with *chi*, a

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bamboo of which is put down in front of each of the guests. 585
As soon as the guests have somewhat collected themselves a 585
meal of bullock's lights is served; it seems to me a most 262
unsuitable dish to offer at dawn on the "morning after." When this delicacy has been disposed of a further meal of rice, vegetables, and so on, in fact the ordinary daily fare, is served. This is followed by yet another dish known as *Alook Zo*, which consists of rice and ribs of beef. It is served to everybody present; but each member of the bride's party receives a piece of raw beef to take home. This is placed on top of the dish of cooked food and is known as *Mangkar*. It is as though, when one goes out to dinner, one finds a juicy raw chop resting on top of the savoury, which one quietly removes and puts in one's pocket. I think it a nice idea.

In the meantime still another bullock, called *Myok Long*, has 585
been tied up a little distance from the house, and to this spot such members of the party as are still capable of walking now proceed. When they get there the bridegroom tells them that the animal has cost him thirty rupees. A certain amount of argument now follows, in which various men express their opinion as to the real worth of the animal; and if the general opinion is that it is not really worth more than, say, twenty-five rupees, then the bridegroom must pay the difference in cash to the bride's attendants. The *Rum fat-bo* is now summoned. He is presented with one rupee and a scarf and sits down near the bullock, with a bamboo of *chi* at his side. He offers the animal to the gods and demons, meanwhile the bride's younger brother kills it with a bow and arrow.

The bride and bridegroom now come and stand before the Mun. "From now on," he says to them, "live peaceably together; or failing this may you be gored by a bullock like this one now lying dead in front of us." To this little speech he adds his personal congratulations and tells the bride that he hopes she will be blessed with at least six boys and six girls.

The party now returns to the house, and there then follows 585
a ceremony called *Ong Kay*. A large plate is put in the middle 431
of the principal room, and into this the bridegroom's parents,

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585 431 or anyone standing in their place, put a ceremonial scarf and one rupee. After this everyone present, with the exception of the bride's official attendants, puts in a coin according to his means or desire, the amounts varying from five rupees down to an anna or two. An average sum collected in this way would amount, so I was told, to about forty rupees; but it is not uncommon for as much as one hundred rupees to be 585 466 collected in the *Ong Kay*. The money is distributed as follows:

Kegu Nunbu	Five rupees
Rum fat-bo	Four rupees
Aku	Four rupees
Ajyong	Four rupees
Changku	Three rupees
Nyom Moo	Six rupees
Nyom Chimbu	Three rupees
Nyom Faming	Three rupees
Faming tyol	Three rupees
Load-carriers	Eight annas each

The ceremonial scarf contributed by the bridegroom's parents is given to the bride, but she does not receive any of the money. If the amount collected at the *Ong Kay* is insufficient for the above payments, the balance must be made up by the bridegroom, who, alternatively, retains any balance.

The bridegroom now pays six rupees to his wife's *Pi-bo* and five rupees to his own, and gives to each a ceremonial scarf. At the same time each receives some eight pounds of mixed beef and pork. After this some man of standing in the village takes the two *Pi-bos* aside: he tells them that in arranging this marriage they have possibly been put to considerable trouble, and have doubtless had to suffer many insults. He adds that all is now successfully over, and he hopes that neither will take umbrage at anything that may have happened. The two men assure him that all is well, thank [431] him for his remarks and give him a couple of annas each.

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This little ceremony, if it can be dignified by such a name, is called *Pi-bo azom*.

This completes the second day's proceedings; but, as before, drinking and conversation are continued well into the night. At about one a.m. one of the *Pi-bos* goes round with a large bowl of the special ceremonial unstrained *chi* and offers it to each of those present. As before, it is not consumed: it is merely offered as an indication that the day's ceremonies are over and that everyone should from then onwards at least talk quietly if he does not wish to sleep.

On the third morning everyone is again wakened with a bowl of *chi*. Lights, however, are not again served, but on this occasion all the guests are given *Tum cheu*, or the entrails of the bullock killed the day before, stuffed with meat of various kinds. These are prepared by the *Changku*, who, as we have already noted, is in entire charge of the distribution of meat. This meal of sausage is followed by another of ordinary rice and vegetables, on top of which is put a hunk of raw beef for each member of the bride' party. As her attendants leave for home each one tears a bit off the joint he has received and returns it to the donor: this symbolises the presentation of a return gift.

The marriage is now over and the bridegroom makes ready to escort the bride, together with all her attendants, back to her home. Before they leave they are presented with a special gift of food called *Lom-to Lom-chong*, which consists of eight pounds of chi-millet and eight pounds of rice. This is meant to be consumed on the way back; but even if the two houses are only a few hundred yards apart the present must be given just the same. The party also takes with it a present known as *Dong-chong Dong-len*, which consists of a load of chi-millet for the bride's parents.

When the party reaches the girl's home the bride and bridegroom remain there for either three or seven days; but they must on no account leave on any of the intervening days, which are considered inauspicious. When they finally leave for the husband's home they are given a present called

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585 *Gor-nen*, which is made up of sixteen pounds of grain of various
591 sorts and one complete load of chi-millet. As soon as the pair
[431] reach home the *Gor shun*, which, as we have already seen, was specially constructed for the accommodation of the bride's party, is knocked down without further ceremony; but it should on no account be demolished until the husband returns with his wife.

591 Seven days later husband and wife once again set off for
[431] the girl's home, taking with them the inevitable load of chi-millet, and eight pounds of grain. Nothing is laid down as to when they should return; and from this time the pair continues to divide its time between the two houses, or at least to pay periodical visits to the girl's home.

[431] One year after marriage a girl may, if she feels so disposed, present her parents with a pig's carcass and another load of chi-millet. This is known as *Nyim phet;* and when it is given it is customary for the parents to make a return present of a milch cow: this is called *Pi jong*. The cow is not, however, actually given to the girl but is merely shown her. If she gives her parents another *Nyim phet* the following year the *Pi jong* becomes her property and she may then take the cow away with her when she leaves.

585 Whatever we may think of Lepcha marriage, it does at
571 least afford a chance for the village to break away for a day or two from its otherwise dull routine, and gives people from distant villages an excuse to meet and talk things over. Moreover, everybody knows exactly what he is expected to contribute: in lean times the dictates of custom are sufficiently observed by putting as little as a couple of annas in the *Ong kay*. But in any case the guest is free from our periodic nightmare of "what shall I give?"; and the bride and bridegroom in their turn are spared an accumulation of the Lepcha equivalent of unwanted plated cruets. It all seems admirably contrived; and a good time is had by all.

587 *14th March:*

Ongden, a man of fifty and the father of the largest family

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587 but the party was continued until dawn the next day. Since this was not a first marriage the full three-day festivities were not carried out: nor will Ongden and his bride make the usual ceremonial visit to her people. In this particular case there was, I gather, really no need for him to have done any ceremony except the formal betrothal; but since he is [554] a man of standing in the village he has preferred to do things properly. In any case, no Lepcha will miss the opportunity of throwing a party, provided the necessary funds are available.

15th March:

A number of "corpses" lying about under the bushes. Most of these had removed themselves by nightfall.

* * * * *

583 Before betrothal a boy usually does a certain amount of work for his future father-in-law, and may even stay in his house should he happen to live in the same village. This service is entirely voluntary and is in no sense looked upon as payment for the bride. After the formal betrothal has taken place, however, the girl's parents can call upon the boy's services for a period of three years; but if the marriage takes place within this period the obligation ceases.

591 When a man has a daughter and no sons he arranges, if 584 possible, that his son-in-law shall live in his house, in which case the boy becomes what is known as a *Komok myok*. In these circumstances he is treated exactly as though he were the real son of the house, except that he has a less hard time. It is not always easy for a man to obtain a *Komok myok* for his daughter; for unless such a boy has several brothers his father will not normally wish to lose him, since it means that he will have no one to help him work his own fields.

431 When a man is so poor that he cannot afford even the 585 minimum marriage gifts everyone in the village helps him. This is looked upon as a gift and is not repayable. It is,

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of course, in addition to the actual cash contributed by the guests at the *Ong kay* already described.

There is a modified form of betrothal ceremony known as *Ah-kut*, which is done by people who cannot afford the full *Ashyek* payments. It consists in the presentation of one pig's carcass to the bride's parents. No one would willingly be married by means of *Ah-kut*, which may be compared with our marriage by Registrar, if he could possibly afford to carry out the full ceremony, for it is a point of honour with Lepchas to entertain one's friends to the full limit of one's purse; and a failure to do so, should funds be available, would be to stamp oneself as a mean fellow and a bad co-operator. *Ah-kut*, however, constitutes full legal marriage, and no further ceremony is necessary.

Except for the additional wives a man may acquire by inheritance Lepchas do not normally marry a second wife unless the first proves to be childless. The custom of marrying additional wives would appear to be an importation, probably through contact with Nepalis, for the language does not contain any specific word to denote a second wife, the Nepali word *Kanchi* being commonly used for this purpose. I am, of course, aware that it is dangerous to base an hypothesis of this sort on linguistic evidence alone; but it is significant that in other parts of Sikkim and adjacent British India Lepchas are monogamous except for the additional wives some acquire by inheritance.

In Jongu it appears that a childless woman nearly always induces her husband to marry again. If possible he will take one of his first wife's sisters, or possibly a niece; but in any case he should try and obtain some sort of relative of his wife, since this arrangement is thought to cause less domestic friction than might otherwise be the case. It sometimes happens, however, that a man decides to remarry without reference to his first wife (as in the case of Aga, for instance), in which case the new wife must give a present, known as *Thim seut*. It does not take any special form. The new wife should also give something to the eldest child of the first wife.

7: Hooker D-5 (1849-1851) 1854
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[582] future father-in-law, the parties being often united before
583 the woman leaves her parents' roof, in cases where the payment is not forthcoming, and the bridegroom prefers giving his and his wife's labour to the father for a stated
●585 period in lieu. On the time of service expiring, or the money being paid up, the marriage is publicly celebrated by feasting and riot. The females are generally chaste,
581 [584] and the marriage-tie is strictly kept, its violation being heavily punished by divorce, beating, slavery, &c. In cases of intermarriage with foreigners, the children belong to the
462 father's country. All the labours of the house, the field,
[567] and march, devolve on the women and children, or slaves if they have them.

164 Small-pox is dreaded, and infected persons often cruelly shunned: a suspicion of this or of cholera frequently emptying a village or town in a night. Vaccination has been
[751] introduced by Dr. Pearson, and it is much practised by Dr. Campbell; it being eagerly sought. Cholera is scarcely known at Dorjiling, and when it has been imported thither has never spread. Disease is very rare amongst the Lepchas; and ophthalmia, elephantiasis, and leprosy, the scourges of hot climates, are rarely known. Goitre prevails,* though not so conspicuously as amongst Bhoteeas,

* May not the use of the head instead of the shoulder-strap in carrying loads be a predisposing cause of goitre, by inducing congestion of the laryngeal vessels? The Lepcha is certainly far more free from this disease than any of the tribes of E. Nepal I have mixed with, and he is both more idle and less addicted to the head-strap as a porter. I have seen it to be almost universal in some villages of Bhoteeas, where the head-strap alone is used in carrying in both summer and winter crops; as also amongst the salt-traders, or rather those families who carry the salt from the passes to the Nepalese villages, and who very frequently have no shoulder-straps, but invariably head-bands. I am far from attributing all goitre, even in the mountains, to this practice, but I think it is proved, that the disease is most prevalent in the mountainous regions of both the old and new world, and that in these the practice of supporting enormous loads by the cervical muscles is frequent. It is also found in the Himalayan sheep and goats which accompany the salt-traders, and whose loads are supported in ascending, by a band passing under the throat.

11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954
AK5 Lepcha AK5

It-lyang."[38] This myth is interesting because it relates, in the first place, the two efforts made by God to create man, and secondly because it relates how God brought the woman into the life of the man, by placing her in some mysterious way in the snare set by man to catch birds. 773

According to another myth the genealogy of mankind is even more complicated. Among the various creatures that were created as It-mo's children, there is also Takbo-thing, who hitherto had been designated as the god of creation. Ta-she is added to the name with whom we shall become more closely acquainted later on. "The last two to be born were Takbo-thing and Nazong-ngyu, and although these were brother and sister, they became husband and wife and had many children."[39] These children however were evil spirits and demons. They were not nourished by their mother, but were disowned and driven away. They live not on the earth but outside the earth. The reason why monsters were born out of this wedlock was surely due to the forbidden and irregular marriage between brother and sister. Rum then separated them. After the separation a human being was born. The mother loved this child deeply and fed it at her breast. When the other children perceived this they grew very jealous, hated the child intensely and so it died. The grief-stricken mother sent two birds up to Tak-bo-thing in order to fetch from him the Water of Life and the Water of Death. Tak-bo-thing gave them both the waters and instructed them about the use of the waters. On their return flight the birds decided not to use the directions as they had been given to them but to reverse them. And so it happens that men die and are always born again. Rum stands as a symbol to man. The Mung demons, on the contrary, do not die, and a priest-magician, Bong-thing, was sent to keep them under control. Only then was it possible for man to live on the earth. He is called Tar-bong-mu. As he was catching birds one day he found a fairy, the daughter of the Lha-ma-yin.[40] He forcibly took this beautiful Narib-nom as his wife. To avoid the misfortune consequent [585]

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38. op. cit. p. 355 sq.
39. op. cit. p. 346.
40. Tibetan name for Titans.

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to an irregular marriage, Rum decided that the marriage ceremonies should be observed. Milletbeer and ferment play an important part in these ceremonies. After the institution of the marriage ceremonies in this manner, the first men could contract a permitted marriage between brother and sister and their children are human beings.

The same story of procuring a ferment for Chi is told by Bong-thing Gu-gu in Git-biyong. Also another myth which we have discovered throws light on the relationship between men and demons: Ti-gung-thik and Ni-gung-ngal had a son. The demon, Susu-mung, also had a son. Both of these children were on the point of dying; and while they were breathing their last, two birds were sent to fetch the Water of Life and the Water of Death as medicine. The birds obtained both, but exchanged the medicines on their return flight. They gave the human child the Water of Death and it died. The child of the demon received the Water of Life and escaped death. Thus it is that demons still continued to plague men. Men made an effort to annihilate the demon, and when it had climbed a high tree one day they pulled the tree down and knocked the demon to pieces. Nevertheless, as the demon had tasted the Water of Immortality, the fragments of his body were transformed into flies, mosquitoes and other dangerous insects which continue to plague mankind.[41]

An old Lepcha, Sam-sing, from Maria-Basti told me this story: All men have descended from common parents. The first parents had three sons. The first was called Lapche and was the father of the Lepcha tribe. The second is the father of the Rai, and the third the father of the Meche. In the course of their wanderings the brothers came across a banana palm. The eldest brother stuck his knife into it with the intention of cutting it down. White water flowed out of the wound. "If that is the case, we shall not stay any longer with you," said the two brothers and they left him and went their way. The two then came across a Gommim leaf. The second brother cut the leaf and the cut turned black. Thereupon the youngest brother said to him, "If

41. cfr. a similar myth of Stocks, op. cit., p. 384.